

A HANDBOOK OF MEDICAL HYPNOSIS. By G. Ambrose and G. Newbold.

Third Edition. (Pp. 336. 45s). London: Ballière, Tindall & Cassell, 1968.

SINCE the British Hypnotism Act of 1952 prohibited exhibitions of hypnosis for entertainment, Ulster is the only part of the United Kingdom where the average person's familiarity (indeed the average medical student or doctor's familiarity) with hypnosis is acquired from a theatre seat. This is the third edition of the authors' Handbook which tries to give an introduction to the subject suitable for practitioners and students.

The opening chapters cover the History of Medical Hypnotism, legal aspects, a discussion of the nature of the hypnotic state and a description of some of the techniques of induction. These are clearly written.

The remaining nine chapters cover hypnosis in various branches of medicine: General Medicine, Psychiatry, Anaesthesia, Paediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynaecology (3 chapters) and Dermatology. These are much more disappointing. The authors give superficial accounts of psychosomatic theories of causation of many diseases, with no discussion of the real uncertainty of these theories. When treatment is described, illustrated by case histories, the importance of *the hypnosis*, rather than the general psychotherapeutic approach, is not made clear. Some sweeping claims are made—for instance in the field of preventive psychiatry—which this reviewer feels could not be substantiated.

This is a book by committed protagonists, not a critical review. The opening chapters can be recommended to those interested in finding out about the approach and techniques. The claims in the later chapters would need to be substantiated. W.O.McC.

STUDIES IN PSYCHIATRY. Edited by Michael Shepherd, D.M., M.R.C.P., D.P.M., and D. L. Davies, D.M., M.R.C.P., D.P.M. (Pp. xi+345. 65s). London: Oxford University Press, 1968.

THE members of the junior medical staff of the Bethlem Royal and the Maudsley Hospital have paid their tribute to Professor Sir Aubrey Lewis on his retirement from the Chair of Psychiatry at the University of London by publishing in two volumes a selection from his writings. The present volume represents part of the harvest that has been reaped as the result of his inspiration and foresight in recognising those aspects of Psychiatry that could be more sharply defined and coaxed to yield valuable information by the application of the scientific method. It is the clinician whose knowledge is enriched by many of the studies described in this book. Little by little facts emerge that help to make psychiatric formulations more precise and treatment more rational.

The work described in this volume is the output of only one of the several departments of the Institute of Psychiatry between 1945 and 1966. The reader will quickly appreciate how frequently the clinician turned to the laboratory and back again to his patients in his quest for explanations of some of the phenomena of Psychiatry. The research worker emerges not as one working in isolation but as a clinician who turns aside from time to time to try to answer some of the questions posed by his patients' illnesses. How closely this approach is in line with Sir Aubrey's views is exemplified by Dr. Davies' quotation in his chapter on Psychiatric Education and Training: '... formulating the problem, relating it to what may be learnt elsewhere than in the company of the patient—this is the body of psychiatric opportunity'.

It would not be appropriate to review here chapter by chapter the record of the work done in the Department of Psychiatry. Each chapter is written by a senior member of the staff who was, and often still is, actively engaged on the work described, and whose work is well known in that particular field. The book is divided into three parts, the first being concerned mainly with Social Psychiatry, Epidemiology, Psychology and Forensic Psychiatry. Part two deals with child Psychiatry, Genetics and Education, whilst part three is devoted largely to physiological, neuro-endocrine, biochemical, pharmacological, and metabolic studies.

This book will provide rewarding reading not only for clinicians but for anyone contemplating systematic research in Psychiatry. It displays at one and the same time something of the complexities of the problems facing Psychiatrists and how they may be tackled by the

application of a wide variety of apposite research techniques, adapted for specific purposes.

The work reported can be seen not only in historical perspective but an overall picture emerges of the inter-relatedness of diverse aspects of clinical and academic work. The candidate for higher examinations should read this book. Its extensive canvas and the references provided will enrich and deepen his knowledge. Not only do the essays present the reader with much factual information but they provoke constructive thought. The book is indeed a fitting tribute to the man in whose honour it was written.

J.G.G.

SEX AND ITS PROBLEMS. Edited by W. A. R. Thompson. (Pp. 90. 15s).
Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone, 1968.

THIS book comprises a series of articles published in 'The Practitioner' throughout 1967. They were written with the family doctor particularly in mind, but they could well be of interest to a wider readership.

The need for medical students to be more conversant with the diagnosis and treatment of sexual disorders has been emphasised in recent years. A knowledge of the psychology of young people should help students to understand sexual disturbances in their proper perspective, indicating as they so often do, much more widespread problems of adjustment. Sexual behaviour is not an isolated phenomenon, bearing little or no relationship to the total personality, but an integral part of it. Disorders in the one may be reflected in disturbances in the other, and vice versa.

It is against this total background that the material discussed in this book should be considered. The first chapter deals with physical disorders, including congenital adrenal hyperplasia, eunuchoidism and primary amenorrhoea. The second chapter is devoted largely to a detailed consideration of intersexuality. This is a very useful summary of the differential diagnostic problems that can arise and of associated chromosomal anomalies. The third chapter dealing with sexual problems of adolescence is straightforward and succinct. It will be of much value to general practitioners for its clarity and direct approach. The psychological aspects of sexual problems in other age groups are dealt with too. In addition there are chapters on homosexuality and perversions. Other topics include impotence and frigidity, infertility and artificial insemination.

This book can be commended especially to medical students and general practitioners. In the reviewer's opinion its value would have been enhanced by a chapter dealing with the range of normal sexual behaviour in different age groups. Such information would be useful to the doctor in dealing with some of the less complicated problems he may see in his work.

J.G.G.

OTHER DAYS AROUND ME. By Florence Mary McDowell. (Pp. 163; illustrations by Rowel Friers. 8s 6d). Dublin: Longmans, Browne & Nolan, 1966.

THIS little book is not really little. It is an important contribution to Ulster literature and social history. An extremely intelligent and perceptive person has observed and understood and interpreted the life of the people of Cogry and Doagh and the district in the late nineteenth century. The medical man will be interested in the account of practical nutrition, and even more interested in the account of flax byssinosis in the scutch mill. Mrs. McDowell describes occupational deafness in the workers in the beetling engines, and, even more remarkable, she describes her Aunt Laetitia's Plummer-Vinson stricture. One has been accustomed to teach that the Plummer-Vinson stricture is unusually common in the valley of the Six-Mile Water, and it is appropriate that this account, the first in general literature, should come from there. Mrs. McDowell describes the features of this dysphagia better than most text books.

Your reviewer is sorry to say that the book is so insightful that it could hardly have been written by a man. It recalls the work of Agnes White and Kathleen Fitzpatrick. The work of the Ulster kailyard school (e.g. Archibald M'Iloy's—'The Auld Meetin' Hoose Green') is valuable as a record, and dear to those who know the North, but this work goes deeper. The Ulster Medical Journal congratulates Mrs. McDowell on the life of observation which has come to harvest in this book.

J.S.L.